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TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN THE LIFE OF MR GRIFFIN.

BY A QUI HY.

We are now in the full enjoyment of all the manifold delights of the English dogdays. Old gentlemen mop their foreheads, and walk on the shady side of the street with their hats in their hands; small boys take cheap shower-baths under the spouts of the water-carts; young ladies subsist entirely on ice and wafers; and fussy people give you their word they never experienced anything like the heat in the whole course of their life. Let us, by way of contrast, change the scene for a short time to the plains of Hindostan, and see the kind of life led by some of our expatriated fellow-countrymen in that complexion-tanning, temper-trying, fever-catching, liver-inflaming, rupee-getting country, during the hot season.

I will be harlequin on the occasion. One blow of my magic-wand—the prompter sounds his whistle—and hey! presto! having insured our lives, and put on our most gossamer dress, we find ourselves, towards the small hours of the morning—the best time to travel in the tropics—in the middle of the station of Burrigurumpore, having beaten the overland mail by five weeks.

It is the beginning of June, before the rains have set in—not that they lessen the heat much, they only change its character: the air, from being dry and dusty, becomes moist and steamy—you live in a vapour-bath instead of a limekiln; and between Burrigurumpore and the lower regions, in point of heat, the natives themselves say there is only a sheet of brown paper.

The moon has just risen, and we can see, dotted about, the houses of the English residents, looking very snug and comfortable in the subdued light. Which shall we enter? Not the large pukka-built* bungalow in the splendid garden; that belongs to the commissioner, who gets 5000 rupees a month, and is, of course, supplied with every luxury and appliance that can lessen the heat, and render the life of the burra sahib, or great man, endurable. Rather let us choose the small cutcha-built one, standing in the perfectly bare compound,† the property of Baboo Chuckerbutty Bux, but let for the time being, and

in consideration of the very irregular payment of thirty rupees per month, to Ensign Go-ahead Griffin, of the Seringapatam Slashers; and we will give him the honour of our society for the twenty-four hours we are going to spend together in the Company's dominions.

There is no Mrs Griffin, so we will walk in without ceremony. After stumbling over a bundle of clothes in the veranda, which grunts on being trod on, and turns out to be the chokydar, or watchman, refreshing himself with a nap, we enter the bungalow. Passing through a large sitting-room, we find ourselves in a sleeping-apartment, which is without a scrap of furniture excepting a bedstead—the legs of which stand in earthenware pans of water, to prevent foraging-excursions on the part of crawling and venomous insects—and a small table near it, on which are placed a bottle of brandy, a tumbler, and a cheroot-box. On the mattress there is a cool Calcutta mat; and on the mat, dressed in a shirt, and loose Turkish trousers, made of Delhi silk, our young friend is extended, panting with heat, and tossing and turning in vain attempts to sleep.

He has lately returned from mess; and his bearer, having divested his weary and passive limbs of his regimentals, and clothed him in the night-dress above hinted at, has retired to the veranda, where, curled up like a dog on the floor, he is sleeping calmly and placidly. Not so his master. The heat is stifling, and would be unbearable, but for the comparatively cool current of air caused by the punka—an enormous fan, suspended by ropes from hooks in the ceiling, and swinging with regular strokes over his head, the fringe within a few inches of his nose. The doors are wide open—and an Indian bungalow is *all doors*—but not a breath of air enters to cool his feverish brow; inside and out, it is like a furnace; the thermometer hanging on the wall indicates a temperature considered in England the maximum of a warm bath. The night is so still, the slightest sound falls with painful distinctness upon his unwilling ear: the distant and incessant bark of the village paria-dog; the everlasting beat of the tam-tam, or native drum, indicating some jollities going on in the bazaar; the periodical cry of conscientious chokydars, who, to prevent themselves from going to sleep on their posts, and to strike terror into the heart of any one prowling near with felonious intentions, continually shout through the night the warning, 'Khubada-a-a-a-r,' or 'Take care;' the muttered conversation and suppressed laughter of the grass-cutters in the compound, who never appear to go to sleep, but squat all night round a blazing fire, cooking jupatties, or wheaten cakes, and smoking

* A pukka-built bungalow is made of properly burnt bricks; a cutcha-built one only of squares of mud, dried in the sun. The term pukka brick applied to an individual, as it often is, requires no explanation.

† The enclosure in which the bungalow stands.

their hubble-bubbles, the guggle-guggle of which tortures to madness his distracted tympanum—these, and a dozen other sounds, insignificant in themselves, but magnified by the stillness of the air and his longing for sleep, wring from the dissolving victim groans of wretchedness, and assume an importance in his feverish imagination which drives him almost frantic, till at last, worn out with fatigue, he sinks into a sort of apoplectic doze. His breathing is thick and irregular, his dreams are hideous, and he restlessly twists himself round, till his feet are on the pillow and his head over the side of the bed. In this uncomfortable position, he is rapidly getting black in the face—a horrible nightmare oppresses him; when all at once he wakes with a snort; he hears the most frightful complication of sounds that ever saluted mortal ears, as if ten thousand screeching imps had been let loose, mixed with the shrieks of women and cries of children—at one moment close to the house, the next, miles away, and scarcely audible; now in full and unearthly chorus of laughing, crying, moaning, howling, shrieking, and whooping; then getting lower and lower, and subsiding at last into a melancholy wail, only to burst out again with redoubled vigour and intensity. Half choked, he starts up and gets a smart crack on the head from the undulating punka, which thoroughly rouses him to the fact, that the horrible yells he has till now associated with his dreams are caused only by a pack of jackals on a scavenging expedition.

Disgusted beyond measure at the occurrence, he seeks consolation in his ice-tub, and tosses off a tumbler of deliciously cold water, which communicates a kind of electric shock to his parboiled anatomy: he could drink a gallon, but must economise the precious liquid. The ice-pits are opened only every second day, and the greatest amount of care and flannel will hardly make his share last the forty-eight hours. Carefully closing his treasure, he lights a cheroot by way of sedative, and takes a stroll in his compound. The moon is shining with a brilliancy only seen in tropical skies; but the beauty of the night has no charm for him—he prefers comfort, which is to be found nowhere but under the punka. He soon returns, and throwing himself on his bed, manfully determines he will go to sleep, in spite of jackals, choky-dars, tam-tams, and hubble-bubbles!

He partially succeeds. His cheroot gradually goes out, and finally drops from his mouth: he is on the point of falling off into a delicious nap, when whirr! whirr! whirr! a sharp, clear, and continuous buzz, close to his ear: it is the trumpet of the mosquito; he knows his tiny enemy, and prepares to annihilate him. Breathless with anxiety, and 'profoundly impressed,' as the French say, with the conviction that the enjoyment of his night's rest depends very much upon the success of his operations, he stealthily disengages his right arm, raises it gently with extended hand, and waits his opportunity. The whirr ceases; his diminutive foe has settled on his cheek, and is about to plunge his proboscis up to the hilt in what he considers a nice juicy spot. 'Now, I've got him!' The sufferer's hand is poised for a moment over the unconscious little glutton, and then descends like lightning—smack! Our hero has dealt himself a severe facer; but he cares not for the tingle; he has smashed his tormentor—at least he thinks so; and with a light heart he turns over, and again composes himself to sleep. Unhappy mortal! He is gradually dropping off, going by easy stages into the land of

dreams: he is already past the half-way house, when whirr! whirr! whirr! 'What, again!—not smashed!' This time his pitiless little assailant selects his nose as a likely diggin, and forthwith inserts his pick. Again the arm is raised—again the hand descends, inflicting serious damage on the olfactory organ, and once more the martyr exultingly sets out for the land of Nod. He has scarcely obtained that unsatisfactory modicum of repose vaguely designated 'forty winks,' when whirr! whirr! again announces the hostile approach of his insatiable tormentor, or another equally vindictive. It is in vain to cope with an enemy that bears a charmed life; and, as a last and desperate resource, our long-suffering sub seizes his hitherto discarded sheet, and, at the risk of suffocation, buries his head and face in its protecting folds.

Only those who have suffered, like Griffin, from similar attacks on a seething night—when a month's pay would willingly be given for an hour's sleep, if that precious commodity were saleable—can enter into his feelings under the trying circumstances. Exhausted nature at last gives in: overcome with fatigue, he falls into a sound sleep, only, however, to awake soon after to a dreamy consciousness of intolerable heat. He is in a perfect bath; the cause is soon explained—the huge fan above him is scarcely stirring. 'Pull the punka!' he shouts to the nodding native in the veranda, whose duty it is to create an artificially cool atmosphere in the room, by the means of a rope working through a hole in the wall of the apartment—'Pull the punka, you sleepy son of an owl!' The machine makes a frantic dash, and for a minute or two a small gale is blowing over our friend's head, soon, however, to moderate, and then subside into another suffocating calm. 'Will you pull the punka,' he roars out in Hindostanee, viciously shying a boot in the direction of the drowsy coolie, 'you lazy, good-for-nothing black pig?' Another violent squall takes place; the punka works with a swing that threatens to bring the whole apparatus down about his ears, causing a grateful diminution of temperature. But the pace is too good to last; the vibrations again become feeble and irregular, varied occasionally with a spasmodic jerk, as the nodding coolie finds he is falling off his stool, and brings himself up by the rope, only making the succeeding lull more unbearable. At last the motion ceases altogether. Human patience is limited, especially in India. A servant who is paid to keep awake, and goes to sleep in the execution of his duty, is guilty of a gross breach of contract—to say nothing of his presumption in doing with ease what his master has been so long unsuccessfully attempting. A stern sense of justice animates Mr Griffin. Grinding his teeth, he gets off his bed and fumbles for his slippers, which some time before he has hurled at a squeaking musk-rat. He can't find them. With bare feet, and at the risk of stepping upon a promenading centipede or scorpion, he gropes his way to his bath-room, and shouldering a large chattie, or earthenware vessel, full of water, staggers to the veranda, where he finds the sinning punka-puller—with his back against a pillar, and mechanically giving feeble tugs at the rope—not only fast asleep, but trumpeting aloud. He dashes a volume of water over the head and face of the culprit. It is bright moonlight; and he takes a malicious pleasure in watching the contortions of the startled native, as, gasping for breath, and his glistening teeth chattering with terror, he throws himself on his knees, and with clasped hands implores his 'lordship,' his 'father,' the 'protector of the poor'—meaning Griffin—not to drown him utterly. His lordship contents himself with an indignant kick, which hurts the unslipped foot of the protector of the poor much more than the bony frame of the coolie, who, however, out of compliment to his master, thinks it necessary to writhe as if suffering excruciating agony;

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and with a threat of cutting off the offender's pay,* if he is ever caught napping again, the jaded ensign has recourse to another tumbler of iced water, which he qualifies this time with a dash of brandy, just to kill the animalcule—an excuse current in India, the amount of alcohol necessary for the operation varying according to the taste of the imbibor.

Glowing with satisfaction and heat, from the judicial business in which he has been engaged, he throws himself on his mat, and again essays to propitiate the drowsy god. He is successful at last; the air, as the morning approaches, is perceptibly cooler, and the 'cold pig' has had a most enlivening effect upon the punka-wallah. In five minutes, Griffin is in a deep sleep that would require whole armies of mosquitoes to rouse him from; they might fly away with him, if they chose, without his knowing anything about it. But alas for the transitory nature of human happiness!—he has not enjoyed the long-wished-for repose more than an hour, when bang goes the morning-gun, shaking the whole house, and booming and echoing all over the station. Griffin, nevertheless, doesn't stir. Next, the reveille strikes up in half-a-dozen places at once, and the air resounds with the rattling of drums, the squeaking of fifes, and the clangour of trumpets and bugles, making enough noise to wake the seven sleepers, but not Griffin, who, happily unconscious of the uproar, remains wrapt in a slumber that Jullien's band, playing the *Row Polka* in his bedroom, would not break.

It requires the accustomed low, monotonous voice of his bearer, who, dressed in white, glides in like a ghost, and standing motionless at the side of the bed, commences in a deep sepulchral tone with 'Sahib.' No reply. 'Sahib.' A grunt is the only answer.

Bearer (in an awful voice). Sa-heeb!

Griffin (scarcely audible). All right.

B. The gun has fired, your lordship!

G. (with an impatient twist). Oh! (A pause, during which the bearer draws on one of his master's socks; he then makes another attempt.)

B. Sahib. (The sahib doesn't stir.)

B. (in a plaintive voice). My lord!

G. (incoherently). If you don't hold your tongue, I'll punch your head.

B. (unmoved). The gun has fired, protector of the poor! (The protector sleepily indulges in some untranslatable Hindostanee abuse.) Enter a khidmutgar, carrying a cup of tea, with a 'top' of foam from the fresh goat's milk.

Khidmutgar (at one side of the bed). My lord, I have brought your tea.

G. (turning away). Very good.

B. (at the other side). Your lordship's tea is brought.

G. (turning back again, and digging his face into the pillow). Oh! take it away, and don't bother. (The khidmutgar places tea on table, and retires, and the bearer puts on the other sock; he then returns to the charge.)

B. (in an injured tone). Sahib.

G. (with one eye open). Yes, yes, I know (impatiently).

B. (knowing he has the best of the argument, as his master must go to parade). Your lordship's horse is at the door.

This is a clencher. After many grunts and growls, interspersed with uncourteous reflections on the bearer's pedigree, Griffin wakes with parched throat and throbbing brow, and by the time he is thoroughly restored to consciousness, finds himself already half dressed under the clever hands of his noiseless domestic. He finishes his hasty toilet, swallows the tea, and,

jaded and unrefreshed, mounts his horse and gallops off to parade, meeting on the road most of his acquaintances, male and female, on horseback or in carriages: the men on duty like himself; the ladies taking advantage of the only cool part of the day to get a little fresh air and exercise.

Although it is scarcely light when he arrives, the men have fallen in; and giving his horse to his syce, who has kept up with him, although he galloped the whole way, and his bungalow is a mile off, he sneaks round the rear of the regiment to prevent Colonel Ramrod or Adjutant Pipeclay from discovering that he is late. The latter sharp-sighted functionary has had his eye upon him, however; and having received from the former a severe 'wiggling,' as a military reprimand is irreverently termed by young gentlemen with their organ of veneration imperfectly developed, the weary sub listlessly strolls through the ranks after his captain; with eyes feeling red hot in their sockets, inspects the arms and accoutrements; mechanically 'tells off' the company, and falls into his place like an automaton: an ensign's place, when he has not to stagger under a heavy colour, being usually in rear of the men, where his toes are trod on, his shins 'barked,' and where he is prodded with bayonets by awkward privates, and invariably 'pitched into' by the colonel when a mistake is made, and that dignity is not sure whose fault it is. Captains are soon ordered to 'fall out,' and the regiment is handed over to the adjutant, who remorselessly trots it about on a hot and dusty plain, till the sun gets too powerful.

Griffin has then to attend a kind of military jail-delivery, called 'orderly-room,' and to sit on a court-martial for the trial of a soldier who has been found asleep on his post, with the feeling that all he requires to make him happy is to sink under the table and go to sleep himself.

Having got through his 'day's work' by about eight o'clock, our sub mounts his horse, and, under the rays of a scorching sun—to protect himself from which he has several yards of white linen wound round his forage-cap—starts homewards, paying a visit on his way to the shop of Rummejee Jammeebhoj, the Parsee merchant—where, after spending half an hour in pulling about that respectable trader's wonderfully miscellaneous stock, which comprises everything from pickled salmon to a grand piano, he eventually buys a warming-pan, or something equally useless, and swallows a glass of curacao and soda-water, which the polite fire-worshipper presses upon him in the most cordial manner, not forgetting, however, to charge for his hospitality in the bill.

Griffin then gallops home through a sun hot enough to make an omelet of any brains he may happen to have under his hat; his horse and himself looking as if they had just stepped out of a vapour-bath.

On arriving at his bungalow, which he finds carefully shut up, with a view of excluding the already heated atmosphere, and keeping in as much of the cool morning air as possible—he shouts for mangoes.

A basketful is brought; and sitting down in the veranda with a large basin of water before him, his jacket off, and shirt-sleeves tucked up to the elbows, he luxuriates in the delicious fruit, till his face and hands are covered with streams of their thick yellow juice. Having emptied the basket, he enters his bungalow, where he finds Tom,* the barber, awaiting him. This necessary functionary—for not even the private soldiers shave themselves in India—commences retailing little scraps of gossip, after the manner of barbers, whether in Bengal or Bond Street; and having invested master with a towel, proceeds to lather his

* Four rupees, or eight shillings a month, on which he keeps a wife and family.

* For some unaccountable reason, a barber never goes by any other name than 'Tom'; a sepooy is always 'Jack.' Perhaps the editor of *Notes and Queries* can throw some light on the subject.

face very gingerly, knowing from experience that his customer is apt to be slightly irritable at this time of the day; and should the most homœopathic particle of soap get into master's nose or mouth, that a sudden contraction of master's right leg would send him flying to the other end of the room.

Tom then produces a razor from a collection of two or three dozen, which he keeps in a towel slung over his shoulder; and having stropped it on his Meehi—namely, the palm of his hand—seizes the protector of the poor by the nose, which indignity his highness is compelled to submit to as a necessary evil; and by half-a-dozen skilful scrapes leaves him shaven and shorn—carrying away with him his lordship's beard on his bare arm, where it is plastered in ridges together with those of other sahibs operated upon in the course of the morning.

Tom having retired with a deep salam—to the ensign's great relief, for the barber's partiality for garlic is painfully apparent—the sahib, with the assistance of his bearer, languidly divests himself of his reeking garments, and with feeble steps totters to his bathroom.

This is a small apartment generally enclosed from the veranda, with a plastered floor, and furnished with a tub of gigantic dimensions. Ranged round the room stand a dozen chatties, made of porous red earth, holding about two gallons, in which the water has stood all night, and which the process of evaporation has rendered comparatively cool, as the punka-wallah, when he got the ducking, could testify.

In the last stage of debility and bad temper, Griffin with difficulty raises a chattie in both hands above his head: he inverts it. 'Ha! ha! cured in an instant!' The water dashes over his splitting head and feverish body: he is a new creature. Another and another follows, till the whole dozen are emptied; he gasps with delight, and then tumbles into his tub, dashing and splashing the water about in pure enjoyment, and puffing and blowing like a grampus, till in about ten minutes he emerges, all pink and smoking, a happy man, and a triumphant demonstration of the excellence of the cold-water system. At peace with all the world, he subdues into a chair under the punka, and surrenders himself, an amiable doll, into the hands of his bearer, who, with the aid of rough towels, rubs him into a pleasant glow, dries his feet, pulls on his socks—in fact, completes his not very elaborate toilet, with the exception of a few finishing-touches, which he adds himself. In most ethereal attire, and with a feeling almost amounting to energy, he manfully walks to his sitting-room, and sets to work to study Hindostanee with his moonshee, or native professor, a very stout and dignified, but not particularly clean old gentleman, who indulges in various habits offensive to Europeans; the suppression of which, however, in oriental society, is not considered essential to the character of a well-bred man. After an hour's 'grind,' he dismisses his fat friend, who departs, and bestows his agreeable society on some other aspiring sub, ambitious of the honour of writing P. H. (Passed in Hindostanee) after his name, without which magical letters no staff-appointment can be obtained. Our ensign then sits down under the punka to a plentiful breakfast, consisting of curry, omelet, fish, rice, eggs, jam, and bottled-beer. What with the bath and Hindostanee, he is positively hungry; and when, after he has done full justice to his kurreem bux's cookery, he lolls back in his arm-chair, watching the smoke of his cheroot curling up over his head, he feels comparatively cool and comfortable, although the atmosphere is that of an iron-foundry.

By degrees, however, the refreshing effects of the bath, breakfast, and 'baccy,' begin to give way to the increasing heat of the day; languor gradually steals over his frame; drawing is too laborious, writing makes his head ache, and, as a last resource, he throws

himself on a sofa, and tries to read—a work of difficulty in the darkened room. As a matter of course, he falls asleep, and awakes unrefreshed and feverish; he wanders restlessly about the house, and, for a change, goes into the veranda, where he superintends his dhurzee, or native Buckmaster, darning his stockings, sewing buttons on his shirts, or artistically imitating a pair of London-made pantaloons.

Everything out of doors looks red-hot, and there is that peculiar wavy appearance in the air that is seen at the mouth of a furnace. Brahmince kites and Egyptian vultures glide lazily about, apparently without the energy to give a single flap to their great wings, occasionally making a languid swoop, and audaciously carrying off a bone or piece of bread from under the very nose of its indignant proprietor dining in the compound. Melancholy adjutants mope on one leg, with their heads buried in their breasts, looking the concentrated essence of prostration and misery; and mangy paria-dogs lie panting in the dust, their frothy tongues and bloodshot eyes causing an involuntary shudder at the thought that they must be already suffering from incipient hydrophobia.

The only things at all lively are the ants, as big as beetles, that swarm in such myriads on the cracked and blistered ground, that it is impossible to walk a yard without crushing dozens; lizards, that glide with ceaseless activity over walls so hot you cannot keep your hand upon them; and troops of pretty little tabby squirrels, that play about in the shade of the mango-trees. Everything else appears to have succumbed to the intense heat, and to be indulging in a general siesta. Even the crows, usually so lively and impudent, sit gasping in long rows on the walls, incapable of motion, with their beaks wide open, and a helpless, idiotic expression on their generally wide-awake countenances.

Nearly scorched, Griffin goes in-doors, and, the twelve o'clock gun having fired, proceeds, nautically speaking, to 'splice the main-brace'—a figurative mode of describing a simple operation, which consists in skilfully combining one-third of brandy with two of water, and drinking it.

Tired of his own society, which he finds excessively stupid, Griffin orders his buggy, and determines to brave both sun and heat in search of a little excitement. Dressed in a highly starched white jacket, and continuations of the same colour and equal consistency, which give him a square, mathematical appearance, he drives to the bungalow of a married acquaintance. He is received at the entrance by a servant, who informs him with a salam that the 'doors are shut,' which means that the 'mem sahib,' or lady of the house, is either too hot or too lazy to receive visitors, being in all probability fast asleep on a couch, in extremely cool and comfortable, but totally unrepresentable dishabille.

Our hero is more successful at the next house, where, having sent in his name—which, on its way to the interior, is transformed by the bearer into 'Gilpin sahib,' or something equally remote from the original—he is ushered into a lofty drawing-room, handsomely furnished, with innumerable little tables scattered about, to the bewilderment of the visitor, who finds he is hopelessly entangled in a labyrinth of these small articles of furniture, from which it is impossible to extricate himself without damaging the numerous nick-knacks with which they are crowded. He is rescued from his nervous position by the fair proprietress, who soon floats in on a cloud of muslin, looking very pretty in the subdued light, which does not reveal the ravages made by the climate in her complexion. The visit passes off as morning visits usually do, and Griffin, having exhausted his stock of small-talk, bows himself out, upsetting a table in his way, and drives to mess. He finds the billiard-room

full of men, with their coats off; most of them engaged in smoking, and drinking the everlasting brandy pawnee. He plays a rubber with Sponge of the artillery for a gold mohur, which he wins; and the least he can do is to ask his opponent to tiffin. 'What will he have?' Sponge is indifferent; he doesn't feel very hungry, but is equal to any amount of liquid. They adjourn to the mess-room, and shout 'Qui hy!' till they are hoarse, making the immense apartment ring with their cries, and causing a bilious old major, who is spelling a paper in the anteroom, to turn green with indignation.

In rushes a frantic khidmutgar. 'What do their lordships want?' Their lordships want to know what there is for tiffin. The turbaned slave, with folded arms—an attitude of respectful attention in India—glances humbly at the table, which is laid out with different sorts of cold meat, casts his eyes up to the ceiling, as if for an immense effort of memory, then casts them down again, and, expecting an explosion, submissively falters out the daily answer: 'Mutton-chop—beefy steak.' He is satirically complimented on his cleverness by one impatient sub, and consigned to a remote and sultry region by the other.

Such tame and common-place dishes not being considered sufficiently enlivening, Griffin proposes a 'devil,' and immediately dismembers a turkey. He mixes mustard, cayenne, Worcestershire sauce, West India pickle, and other irritating stimulants, and, pouring the mixture over the *disjecta membra*, sends them out to be transformed into an angry grill, threatening the shrinking dardy with instant decapitation in case of failure.

During its preparation, our two friends entertain themselves with a game of 'fly loo'—an amusement extremely popular in India, affording, as it does, a vast amount of intellectual excitement, with little or no exertion. It is played thus: A pool is formed, and a piece of sugar placed on the table before each player; whichever lump is first pitched upon by a fly, the lucky owner wins the pool. The anxiety with which an undecided insect is watched by the gamblers, is of course intense.

Six games have been decided, besides a dead-heat—a fly having settled on each lump at exactly the same moment—when the devil makes its appearance, and is so successful, the first mouthful brings tears into the gunner's eyes. By this time, the table is nearly full of men, who lounge in, attracted by the grill and its accompaniments, and, 'just for something to do,' follow the example of our heroes. After tiffin come brandy-and-water and cheroots, without which *addenda* no meal in India is complete. Some of the party saunter back into the billiard-room; but the majority sit smoking and drinking under the punka till it is time—the sun being nearly down—to ride or drive on the course.

Feeling none the steadier for the cup, or the brandy pawnee necessary to rectify it, Griffin having asked Sponge, who is rather uproarious, to dine with him, gets into his buggy and drives home. He then undergoes a species of torture in buttoning himself up in his uniform, and sallies out to 'eat the air,' which, although the sun is down, is still like the blast of a furnace, and a good deal adulterated with dust.

As Griffin rides quietly along the watered course, the trifling exertion necessary to keep his seat on his smooth-paced, but stumbling little Arab, puts him in a mild fever, while an unavoidable bow to the wife of a military bigwig, brings on a sharp attack of prickly heat—a kind of rash that afflicts the Anglo-Indian epidermis during the hot season, the sensation connected with which can only be compared to the united application of a mustard-plaster and a furze-bush.

Arriving at where the band is playing, he goes the

round of the carriages, filled with lolling mem sahibs, dressed in medieval fashions, and looking rather dissipated. He does the amiable to all his dinner-giving acquaintance, and fights his way through a swarm of amorous bachelors, to pay his devotions, for Griffin is inflammable, after the manner of ensigns, to the belle of the station, a handsome overdressed girl, the only spinster for a hundred miles round, who, to the despair of some dozen spoony subalterns, Griffin included, will eventually marry the commissioner—a dried-up old gentleman, who owns, lucky girl! lacs of rupees, and, luckier still, an inflamed liver!

At the feet of this Delilah, our smitten hero remains till *God save the Queen* disperses the assembly; and he rides home to dress for dinner, calculating the chances of the divinity in the carriage ever becoming Mrs Griffin; forgetting, poor devil! that all his widow would get out of the fund would be perhaps a hundred a year; whereas, when malignant hepatitis carries off that valuable public servant, Capsicum Currie, Esq., C. S., a grateful Company will endow his heart-broken relict with a pension of not less than a thousand.

On getting to his bungalow, our friend again tries the effect of a bath, which, though not so invigorating as the morning one—the water is not so cold—freshens him up sufficiently for the arduous undertaking before him—a mess-dinner in the month of June.

While performing his ablutions, a continued hum in the room warns him that his enemies, the mosquitoes and sand-flies, are collecting their forces at the approach of night, and are thirsting for his blood.

And around him the Suggema,
The mosquitoes, sang their war-song.

His toilet progresses swimmingly as long as he keeps under the punka, but the moment he leaves that haven of refuge, his collars collapse, and fall limp and starchless over his neck-tie, and a map of England breaks out in the middle of his shirt-front. Reckless of appearances, he drives to mess, and finds the anteroom rapidly filling. It is 'guest-night,' and every service, regiment, and department has its representative got up according to regulation. There is the sensible white jacket of the native infantry, and the red-hot shell of the Queen's officer; the regular cavalry in French gray and silver, the irregular in scarlet and gold; riflemen in green, artillery in blue, and civilians in black; some buttoned up, others unbuttoned; with waistcoats, and without; all talking, laughing, and enjoying themselves, with none of the starch, frostiness, and awful pauses incident to the five minutes before dinner in England. Griffin prescribes a glass of sherry to Sponge, nothing loath; and by the time *Punch* and the *Illustrated*, five weeks old, which the mail has just brought, have been skimmed through, the bugles strike up the *Roast Beef*; and the chief butler, a portly old Mussulman, in snowy attire and a gorgeous turban, with bare feet and a beard nearly down to his waist, announces with a salam that dinner is on the table. At this signal, hosts and guests crowd into the mess-room, which is blazing with light, and take their seats indiscriminately at a long table, where covers are laid for about forty. Then commences a scramble of excited khidmutgars, each officer having one in attendance, who, in their struggles to supply the wants of their respective masters, fill up the doorways, and prevent a free current of air through the room—producing, with the assistance of the hot dishes and hot lamps, an atmosphere 'more easily imagined than described.' The table is supplied with all the delicacies of the season, including the eternal turkey and ham, without which no burra khana, or great dinner, is considered complete. Eating in such a temperature is a mere matter of form. Soup and hermetically sealed salmon are sent away untasted—entrées are only flirted with—joints positively shuddered at—and

Griffin makes a hearty meal off a quail, roasted in vine-leaves, and prawn curry, while Sponge only feels himself equal to an ortolan and a plantain fritter. Though the consumption of solids appears a toil to every one, except some ravenous young cornets and ensigns with ridiculous English appetites, beer, sherry, champagne, Moselle, and claret disappear in incredible quantities, to say nothing of shandygaff, badminton, and other insinuating preparations, that circulate with a rapidity marvellous to behold.

Dessert follows, consisting of dried fruit from England, and the productions of the country, such as mangoes, plantains, pomegranates, and water-melons. As soon as the wine is placed on the table, the president rises and proposes 'The Queen;' the vice echoes the toast. Her Majesty's health is drunk in a bumper, and the band strikes up the anthem. After the decanters have gone round five or six times, coffee is brought, and, simultaneously with it, a lighted cheroot appears in every man's mouth, unless there happen to be present one or two antediluvian old patriarchs, who prefer the almost exploded hookah. Wonderful unanimity prevails, however, with regard to brandy pawnee, a goblet of which universal liquid is placed before each smoker, irrespective of age or tobacco. As soon as the band has got through its programme, Griffin and Sponge adjourn to the billiard-room, where, already slightly excited—music always has such an extraordinary effect upon him, Sponge says—they further mystify themselves by a series of 'pegs' of brandy and soda-water, till the bombardier becomes quite incoherent, and chalks the top of his finger in mistake for his cue, and Griffin sees more balls on the table than are permitted by the rules of the game.

In this jovial state they are no longer fit society for the reader, and we will therefore cut their acquaintance, not caring to follow them into the mess-house, where 'vingt un' is going on, songs sung, grilled bones and iced beer discussed, and scenes enacted that are best untold, our friend Go-ahead keeping it up till past the hour when we were first introduced to him, and being put to bed by his bearer in a condition of utter helplessness—the united effect of heat and dissipation—where he will snore away half the day in a miserable state, having taken the precaution, the evening before, in expectation of a 'wet night,' to ask for leave from parade on the plea of being indisposed—which he certainly was.

It is perhaps unnecessary, before making my bow, to assure parents and guardians that Griffin is not to be considered in the light of a model subaltern—far from it; and to enable the ship-loads of embryo members of council and generals of division, annually exported by Mr Green and the P. and O. Company, to avoid his errors and their consequences, let each young hero, on landing in the splendid country in which he has been fortunate enough to obtain an appointment, be guided by the following rules:—Eat sparingly; eschew heavy tiffins and hot suppers; drink in moderation; prefer beer to brandy; go to bed early; take regular exercise; avoid borrowing from a bank as you would the cholera; keep up your drawing, music, or any other little accomplishment you may have a taste for; study the language; get a staff-appointment; marry the first nice girl you can persuade to share your fortunes with you; and, in all human probability, by the time you have earned your pension, you will arrive at home still a young man, with a handsome competence, a healthy liver, a blooming wife and happy children, and will spend the evening of your days in the bosom of your family, in ease and comfort, with the consciousness of having deserved it. Having given which piece of advice gratis as a sort of moral, or 'tag,' the prompter's whistle sounds once more—half of Griffin's bungalow is drawn somewhere up into the roof, the other half is lowered through the stage into those mysterious lower

regions whence issue, through unexpected trap-doors, imps, fairies, ghosts, and Corsican Brothers—the wings, covered with bamboo, palm, and cocoa-nut trees, disappear: we are again in dear Old England, which we never properly appreciate till we have been absent from it; and the Qui Hy makes his exit with a profound salam, trusting that the reader does not regret the twenty-four hours or thereabouts he has spent in the great John Company's Oven.

GLANCES AT DR DAUBENY'S CHELTENHAM ADDRESS.

In this authoritative exposition of the recent progress of science, there are some particulars well worthy of general observation. The learned president of the British Association remarked that 'the discovery of cyanogen in the first instance, and the recognition of several other compound radicals in organic chemistry more lately, naturally suggest the idea, that many of the so-called elements of inorganic matter may likewise be compounds, differing from the organic radicals above mentioned merely in their constituents being bound together by a closer affinity.' This Dr Daubeny recognises as a prognostic that the reveries of the alchemists may yet be realised; adding the remark, 'how frequently the discoveries of modern days have served to redeem the fancies of medieval times from the charge of absurdity.'

In organic chemistry, there are certain compounds which it has hitherto been the favourite doctrine to suppose only producible by the vital force. Within the last few years, several of these have been formed in the laboratory by art; and very recently, as we learn from Dr Daubeny, some others have been produced—'several species of alcohol from coal-gas by Berthelot, oil of mustard by the same chemist, and taurine, a principle elaborated in the liver, by Strecker.' This is not merely interesting, as illustrative of one of the profoundest mysteries of nature, but it is valuable, as giving a hope that certain highly useful, but rare articles of nature's laboratory may yet be formed in man's. 'If quinine, for instance, to which Peruvian bark owes its efficacy, be, as it would appear from recent researches, a modified condition of ammonia, why may not a Hofmann be able to produce it for us from its elements, as he has already done so many other alkaloids of similar constitution?' The learned doctor even glances at a possible artificial substitute for coal. Why not add, bread? Meanwhile, 'chemistry has given token of her powers, by threatening to alter the course of commerce and to reverse the tide of human industry. She has discovered, it is said, a substitute for the cochineal insect in a beautiful dye producible from guano. She has shewn that our supply of animal food might be obtained at a cheaper rate from the Antipodes, by simply boiling down the juices of the flesh of cattle now wasted and thrown aside in those countries, and importing the extract in a state of concentration. She has pointed out that one of the earths which constitute the principal material of our globe contains a metal, as light as glass, as malleable and ductile as copper, and as little liable to rust as silver; thus possessing properties so valuable, that when means have been found of separating it economically from its ore, it will be capable of superseding the metals in common use, and thus of rendering metallurgy an employment, not of certain districts only, but of every part of the earth to which science and civilisation have penetrated.' [A specimen of this metal, produced from clay, was shewn at one of the evening meetings of the Association.]

Dr Daubeny adverted to difficulties which had been seen to arise in regard to the principle of 'the derivation of each species [of plants] from an individual, or

pair of individuals, created in one particular locality.' These anomalies, he says, 'were of two kinds, and pointed in two opposite directions; for we had in some cases to explain the occurrence of a peculiar flora in islands cut off from the rest of the world, except through the medium of a wide intervening ocean; and in other cases to reconcile the fact of the same or of allied species being diffused over vast areas, the several portions of which are at the present time separated from each other in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of the migration of plants from one to the other. Indeed, after making due allowances for those curious contrivances by which nature has in many instances provided for the transmission of species over different parts of the same continent, we are compelled to admit the apparent inefficiency of existing causes to account for the distribution of the larger number of species; and must confess that the explanation fails us often where it is most needed, for the Composite, in spite of those feathery appendages they possess, which are so favourable to the wide dissemination of their seeds, might be inferred, by their general absence from the fossil flora, to have diffused themselves in a less degree than many other families have done. And, on the other hand, it is found, that under existing circumstances, those Composite which are disseminated throughout the area of the Great Pacific, belong in many cases to species destitute of these auxiliaries to transmission.' He adverts to the aid which geology has given in solving these difficulties. 'By pointing out the probability of the submergence of continents on the one hand, and the elevation of tracts of land on the other, it enables us to explain the occurrence of the same plants in some islands or continents now wholly unconnected, and the existence of a distinct flora in others too isolated to obtain it under present circumstances from without. In the one case we may suppose the plants to have been distributed over the whole area before its several parts became disunited by the catastrophes which supervened; in the other, we may regard the peculiar flora now existing as merely the wreck, as it were, of one which once overspread a large tract of land, of which all but the little patch upon which it is now found had since been submerged.' We fear that Dr Daubeny has been here misled by a mere unsupported hypothesis, for assuredly we have nothing in favour of the idea but a certain mobility seen in the frame of the land, and not even an attempt has been made to shew traces of the great geological operations assumed. The notion is, in fact, irreconcilable with many features of the actual lands in question. It is particularly absurd in its application to the Pacific Islands, many of which are isolated coral formations, and where, as Dr Daubeny himself reports the recent observations of botanists, 'the families of plants which characterise some groups are of a more complicated organisation than those of another. Thus, whilst Otahite chiefly contains Orchids, Apocynaceæ, Aeclepiadeæ, and Urticaceæ; the Sandwich Islands possess Lobeliaceæ and Goodeniaceæ; and the Galapagos Islands, New Zealand, and Juan Fernandez, Composite, the highest form perhaps of dicotyledonous plants.'

The truth is, an indefinite mobility of the land is merely one of those ideas which every now and then arise as a means of explaining certain things, and which, by reason of their explaining them in a certain favourite direction, are admitted upon little or no evidence, and usually reign till their fallacy becomes too gross for even the weakest and most prejudiced understandings. Another of these ideas, not long ago in full authority, was an indefinite vitality of seeds. For any appearance of new plants, this explanation was ever ready—seeds can exist in the earth for any length of time, and, after all, germinate when the proper conditions arise. We never heard of any one looking for the seeds in the ground, where many of them must

have been readily detected if they existed. Dr Daubeny now tells us that experiment speaks to the contrary purport. An inquiry conducted by the British Association itself has shewn that 'none of the seeds which were tested, although they had been placed under the most favourable artificial conditions that could be devised, vegetated after a period of forty-nine years; that only twenty out of 288 species did so after twenty years; whilst by far the larger number had lost their germinating power in the course of ten.'

The recent researches of Drs Hooker and Thomson in the botany of India have been in harmony with a movement which was conspicuous in the section of naturalists at Cheltenham, for the restriction of the number of species. It is now generally acknowledged that a mistake has been made in attaching the term species to so many forms of plants and animals, as a vast number of them are mere varieties resulting from slight differences of condition. Dr Daubeny views this with a confessed alarm, lest it favour a doctrine of startling consequences, that of transmutation of species. And he endeavours to repel that doctrine, but not, as it strikes us, with such powerful objections as may yet be presented. 'All I shall venture to remark on the subject,' he says, 'is, that had not nature herself assigned certain boundaries to the changes which plants are capable of undergoing, there would seem no reason why any species at all should be restricted within a definite area, since the unlimited adaptation to external conditions which it would then possess might enable it to diffuse itself throughout the world, as easily as it has done over that portion of space within which it is actually circumscribed. Dr Hooker instances certain species of *Coprosma*, of *Calmisia*, and a kind of Australian fern, the *Lomaria procera*, which have undergone such striking changes in their passage from one portion of the Great Pacific to another, that they are scarcely recognisable as the same, and have actually been regarded by preceding botanists as distinct species. But he does not state that any of these plants have ever been seen beyond the above-mentioned precincts; and yet if nature had not imposed some limits to their susceptibility of change, one does not see why they might not have spread over a much larger portion of the earth, in a form more or less modified by external circumstances. The younger Decandolle has enumerated about 117 species of plants which have been thus diffused over at least a third of the surface of the globe, but these apparently owed their power of transmigration to their insusceptibility of change, for it does not appear that they have been much modified by the effect of climate or locality, notwithstanding the extreme difference in the external conditions to which they were subjected. On the other hand, it seems to be a general law, that plants, whose organisation is more easily affected by external agencies, become, from that very cause, more circumscribed in their range of distribution; simply because a greater difference in the circumstances under which they would be placed, brought with it an amount of change in their structure, which exceeded the limits prescribed to it by nature.' Dr Daubeny thinks all this converges in favour of a law of permanence as presiding over the universe.

Towards the conclusion of his address, the learned president alluded to the variations of temperature proved by geology to have taken place at different periods, and puts this phenomenon into connection with the internal fires of volcanoes and with earthquakes. He points to a Report on Earthquake Phenomena published by Mr Mallet, as following up views of his own on volcanoes long ago published. 'If earthquakes,' he says, 'bring under our notice chiefly the dynamical effects of this hidden cause of movement and of change, those of volcanoes serve to reveal to us more especially their chemical ones; and it is only by

combining the information obtained from these two sources, together with those from hot springs, especially as regards the gaseous products of each, that we can ever hope to penetrate the veil which shrouds the operations of this mysterious agent; so as to pronounce, with any confidence, whether the effects we witness are due simply to that incandescent state in which our planet was first launched into space, or to the exertion of those elective attractions which operate between its component elements—attractions which might be supposed to have given rise, in the first instance, to a more energetic action, and consequently to a greater evolution of heat, than is taking place at present, when their mutual affinities are in a greater measure assuaged.' The professor still leans, as before, to what may be called the chemical theory of volcanoes, reminding those who prefer the 'contrary hypothesis on the ground that the oblate figure of the earth is in itself a sufficient proof of its primeval fluidity, that this condition of things could only have been brought about in such materials by heat of an intensity sufficient, whilst it lasted, to annul all those combinations amongst the elements which chemical affinity would have a tendency to induce, and thus to render those actions to which I have ascribed the phenomena, not only conceivable, but even necessary consequences, of the cooling down of our planet from its original melted condition.'

BROWN'S AMANUENSIS.

Brown was a magazine-writer, of what is sometimes called the fast school. His were the veriest bubbles of the current literature of the day, the merest froth of the trifles which are skimmed rather than read by the busy world of pleasure. He touched—I borrow the beautiful language of a fashionable reviewer—he touched the passing follies of the day with a light and facile pen, and people smirked over his articles in a manner pleasant to witness. My opinion is, that his abilities were—in short, were not first-rate, but he used them very ably. He never wrote in men's language for a lady's magazine, and never threw away the delicate wit which suited its pages upon the middle-aged gentlemen who prefer scandal and satire.

To the world of periodicals, Brown was known as a rising comic writer, while to himself, he was a man of crushed ambition and rejected manuscripts. In a drawer of his writing-table, under a Chubb's lock, were a treatise on ethics, several pamphlets on political and financial questions, a biography of the poet Mason—unduly neglected now, but who flourished a good deal in the last century—and, lastly, a history of Nova Zembla, with an account of the climate and productions of that isolated region. These several manuscripts were brought into existence when Mr Brown first came to London. While he had money, he wrote what he pleased; when he had not, he had the good sense (and good-fortune) to write what pleased the public. The result was, that he was in a fair way of doing well in his line of business.

But Brown was, unhappily, rather of a restless temper. 'I'll be a butterfly,' he said to himself, after he had hawked his ethics from west to east and back again; and for some months he laboured with fair success in the field of the lightest literature, and got his bread and butter by it, and amused himself in his leisure hours like any other young gentleman. It must be observed, however, that he never lost that lofty opinion of his own talents which had formerly stimulated his efforts, and he was on the look-out for a subject on which he might build a great work of fiction. 'Fiction,' he said to himself, 'is the thing. If I could only get hold of a plot, a real plot, I would

write a romance which should commence a new era in the literature of this country.'

So Brown was accustomed to meditate; but it was not until very recently that anything came of it. It was after reading of important events taking place in Spain, that he determined to lay his scene there. Spain was the land of romance; his characters should be the men now swaying its destinies, his time the present day. 'I will read up the history,' he said; 'and with *Gil Blas*, Mr Borrow, and the *Tales of the Alhambra*, I think something may be done.' Familiarity with modern Spanish customs was, however, indispensable, and Brown's knowledge of that subject was limited. Fortunately, information, like any other article, can be obtained readily in London by those who can pay for it, and after ten minutes' reflection, which was as much as he now devoted to any question, Brown sent the following advertisement for insertion in the *Times*:—

Amanuensis Wanted.—The Applicant will be required to have recently travelled or resided in Spain. Remuneration according to qualifications. Apply to B. B., 99 Hampstead Road.

Brown had certain literary engagements which it was necessary to fulfil in a given time, and he set himself busily to work to get rid of these as soon as possible. To this end he shunned amusements, public and private, retired into the solitude of his apartments, and requested the prim maid-servant who attended at his call to receive all visitors with the assertion that he was out of town. In consequence of these arrangements, he was enabled to produce in the course of the day a great deal of what printers call 'copy'—a name which, in the present state of literature, is frequently correct in more senses than one.

On the morning when the advertisement appeared, Brown was seated at work as usual, and had just completed a philosophical paper 'On the Diminished Diameter of Ladies' Hats,' when the maid-servant, fresh from the country, opened the door.

'If you please, sir'—

'Well,' said Brown mildly.

'There's a lady down stairs, and she wants you, sir.'

Now Brown was not accustomed to receive visits from ladies, and the announcement caused him some little surprise; but he was not curious, and desired quiet. So he replied: 'She wants me, does she? I am very sorry, but she can't have me. Tell her so, Sarah, if you please.'

'Oh, sir, you're such a funny gentleman,' Sarah said, and lingered.

'That's how I pay my rent, Sarah,' replied Brown. 'Remember, in future, that I am out of town to everybody.'

'Please sir, it's B. B. she wants,' the girl persisted, who had received special directions as to answers to the advertisement.

'Eh! a lady? Shew her up.' And Brown hastily threw off his dressing-gown, and assumed a garment somewhat less variegated. 'Odd,' thought he—'decidedly'; and he seated himself in his chair to await the result. A light step was heard on the staircase, and the lady, who had sent no card, entered the room. Brown turned, and rose to offer her a chair, but paused suddenly without doing so. The visitor was equally embarrassed, and the silence endured until you have read the next paragraph. Brown paused; because instead of the middle-aged lady, with a British Museum complexion, whom he had expected to see, there stood before him a young girl, whose age could not have been more than twenty, and whose beauty was enhanced by the deep blush which rose to her downcast eyes.

Brown first recovered himself, I am happy to say; and having got hold of a chair, he jerked it rather nervously on to the ground, and said something about doing him the honour to be seated.

'I fear, sir, there is some mistake.' The voice was a very sweet one, as, indeed, it could not help being, Brown thought.

'You wished to make some inquiry about my advertisement,' he said, with some hesitation.

'Then you are B. B. ?'

'I am B. B., madam.'

The visitor rose, and, bowing her head to him, said: 'I must apologise for having intruded upon you, and beg you to excuse the mistake which—which has caused this visit;' and she moved towards the door.

'I beg your pardon,' Brown said hastily. 'One moment. Will you be kind enough to explain'—

'Pray, do not ask me, sir;' and again she turned to the door. Brown was by no means satisfied.

'I have no right to detain you; but if I can be of service to you in any way, pray do me the pleasure of saying so.' It will be observed that Brown's language was remarkably polished—a trait on which he prided himself.

'It is impossible,' she said, looking up at him; and perhaps seeing something honest about his face, she continued: 'I saw the advertisement, which seemed so well suited to me, that I hoped it might be from a lady, or some one who—who could have accepted my services.'

'I should be most happy,' Brown began. She shook her head, and replied now without embarrassment:

'I was mistaken.'

'You have been in Spain?' Brown asked.

'I have only just returned from there.'

'I cannot, of course, press upon you anything to which you have an objection; but if you will permit me, it may be possible to arrange the matter in a way which will overcome any difficulty.'

She looked up, and Brown was encouraged to proceed.

'The assistance I require may be rendered at your own house, if such an arrangement would suit you.'

For a moment she looked as if it would, but glancing once more at Brown, she seemed to take another resolution, and wishing him good-day rather abruptly, she disappeared down the stairs. Brown is considered—by some people—a very handsome fellow; but whether that had anything to do with frightening her away, I must leave the ladies to determine.

Brown jumped up, and stepped to the window, which commanded a small strip of garden in front of the house. 'Very odd!—no name—no nothing! There she goes! Very pretty figure!—awful shabby bonnet!' Such was the turn of his thoughts while the shabby bonnet moved along the garden-wall and disappeared. Then he suddenly put on his hat, and followed it at a distance.

He admitted to himself that this was an absurd thing to do, and thought he would go back sensibly; then, as the bonnet passed round a corner, he quickened his steps, and meditated no more till he caught sight of it again. The bonnet passed round a great many corners, and hurried along at a speed which surprised him, leading him through dingy and narrow streets, and disappearing at length up a court, which seemed to be a playground for the children of the neighbourhood.

The door of one of the houses stood open, and Brown perceived a woman seated at work in a room on the ground-floor. Walking over some children who were strewn about the steps, he entered the room, and took his stand beside a cradle, while he addressed the mistress of the apartment. Did a young lady wearing so and so lodge there? She did—on the third floor back. The bell was broken, and he had better walk up.

Bashfulness had ceased to be one of Brown's failings, but yet he hesitated considerably at the door which was pointed out to him. At length he knocked nervously, and being told to 'come in,' did so.

It was a little sitting-room, the walls of which still retained some vestige of a dingy paper, which had

once covered them. There were two chairs and two small tables, and a portrait of Her Majesty over the chimney-piece. A quantity of needle-work lay scattered about the room, which, in spite of its poor appearance, was clean, and even fragrant, for a large pot of mignonne stood outside the open window. A pale withered-looking woman sat in one of the chairs, propped up by cushions, and the object of Brown's impertinent inquiries stood near the window, looking at the intruder with great indignation.

Their story may be told in a very few lines. The elder lady, a widow, had supported herself for several years in a small shop, while her daughter, who in early life had been under the care of good masters, had accompanied a family to Spain, as governess. At length the widow fell into bad health, and being unable to attend to her little shop, was soon reduced to a condition of utter poverty, on which the daughter at once quitted her situation, and, under the protection of a family of tourists, returned to England. She could do little for her mother's support without again leaving her, a course which both were most anxious to avoid; and thus it happened that she had been attracted by the advertisement in the *Times*, lent her by a neighbour.

Brown learned half of this story in a glance round the room, and was encouraged to persevere. He introduced himself to the elder lady, and exerted himself to the utmost to remove the unfavourable impression he had produced. She received him with a politeness which at once put him at his ease, and gradually the daughter was induced to join in the conversation. What may have been said, I do not know, but the interview lasted for at least half an hour, and from that time Brown became a frequent visitor.

Somewhere under the shadow of the Wrekin in Shropshire, there lives a Mr Silas Brown, a retired medical practitioner, a bachelor, and Brown's uncle. When our Brown was a boy, his uncle Silas took a fancy to him, and even went so far as to buy a small piece of ground in his name in an improving neighbourhood. Brown had always shewn a proper sense of his uncle's generosity, though hitherto he had not derived any advantage from it, for the old gentleman persisted in retaining the property, and acting as trustee. He had worked his way up without help, and he was determined that his nephew should do the same. It was a fine thing for a young man. Besides, by keeping down the boy's income, he would be prevented from making some foolish marriage—a term which Silas Brown was used to apply to marriage under any circumstances.

About three months after the adventure of the advertisement, the old gentleman was startled by a letter from his nephew, in which the latter for the first time alluded rather pointedly to 'those three acres by the new church.'

'You have always told me, my dear uncle'—so ran the letter—'to consider this land as my own. I have no right to presume upon your kindness, but I should be very glad if you would allow me to derive some immediate advantage from it. The fact is, that I am engaged upon a work—scene laid in Spain—from which I hope great things, and I am compelled in consequence to keep an amanuensis, which is very expensive.'

The elder Mr Brown read this letter with a doubtful expression of face. 'Great work, indeed!' he said to himself. '*Chateau en Espagne!* I'll go to London, and see what that boy's doing.' And therefore Mr Brown wrote no reply to the letter, but he presented himself a few days afterwards at 99 Hampstead Road.

'Out of town!—nonsense, my good girl,' the old gentleman said to Sarah, who vainly attempted to oppose his entrance. 'This is the room, I think?' and he walked in without further ceremony. His face grew absolutely purple as he did so; for there was his nephew seated at a table busily writing, and opposite to him

was a young lady, very simply dressed, but very good-looking.

'Well, sir!' he exclaimed, in a tone by no means pleasant.

Brown, as soon as he recovered from his surprise, shook his uncle's unwilling hand, and pressed him into a chair. As to the young lady, she blushed considerably, and seemed anxious to run away.

'Pray, sir, is this your—your amanuensis?'

Poor Brown hesitated, and at length said: 'Yes, sir.' 'What!' the old gentleman said in a tone so menacing, that Brown thought it best to lead the young lady out of the room, whispering to her some reassuring words.

The old gentleman wiped his brow. 'John, I can't tell you how grieved I am at what I have seen to-day. That you should be so lost, not only to principle, but even to ordinary propriety'—

'My dear uncle, what do you mean?'

'Mean?—why, you won't persist in the story of that young person being your amanuensis? What is she doing here, sir?'

'It's all over with the three acres,' Brown thought. 'I must tell him.'

'I admit, sir, that I have practised some little deception upon you, and yet I told the truth.'

'Eh?'

'I mean that that lady is indeed my amanuensis, but that she is also'—

'Well, sir?'

'My wife.'

'Now it's all over,' Brown said to himself. His uncle was evidently taken by surprise. He threw himself back in his chair, and drawing out his snuff-box, helped himself to several pinches successively. At last he spoke in a much calmer tone, and said gravely: 'I am very glad to hear it.'

Brown would have been ill fitted for his position as a comic writer if he had not possessed a profound knowledge of human nature. Thought he, this is the proper time to say nothing. In dealing with one's relations, there is the great advantage of knowing that their hearts are in the right place, whatever may be the case with the rest of the world. Uncle Silas is one of the family, and he'll come round by degrees.

Uncle Silas might or might not be coming round, but in the meantime he sat in profound silence, using his snuff-box at intervals. At last he spoke.

'John, I have been mistaken in you. Don't suppose that I object to marriage; on the contrary, I approve of it when undertaken prudently—not otherwise. Yours has been most imprudent. Not only that, sir, but you have been guilty of a deception which is unmanly and disgraceful.'

Brown felt the truth of this, and shewed it in his face.

'For that, sir, I have to beg your pardon.'

'Humph!' said his uncle.

'But as regards the imprudence of my marriage, sir, consider that I live by writing light articles for the magazines.'

'Pretty business it is to support a wife!'

'And consider the advantage one derives in such work from the graceful fancy and admirable taste of a woman. How many writers enjoy a reputation which has been chiefly earned by their wives? When you hear of Mr. A., author of So-and-So, you may not suspect how much Mrs. A. had to do with that celebrated work; how she pointed A.'s dialogue for him, and managed his love-scenes, and helped him with an idea when his plot got into inextricable confusion. And then, sir, my case'—

'I don't want to hear any more, John. Remember, I am not in a passion; I am not angry, mind; but I shall leave it to time to shew whether you have acted prudently or not. Don't attempt to argue: I consider

that by deceiving me, you have forfeited any claim you had upon me; and Mr. Brown took up his hat, as if with the intention of leaving the house.

'If by claim you mean money, sir, I can do without it; but I am sorry, indeed, to have lost your good opinion. Still'—

'You would do it again in the same way, I suppose.'

Brown hesitated. 'After all,' he thought, 'I have done no wrong; why should I speak like a criminal?'

'Well, perhaps I would; but I assure you'— He stopped, for his uncle had dashed his hat on to the table, and scattered Brown's card-basket to the four winds.

'Very well, sir,' the old gentleman said; 'I see how it is. You know how valuable the land now is, and you know, too, that it was bought in your name. You are of age, sir, and may set your old uncle at defiance.'

'You do me great injustice,' Brown said, and repeated the same thing several times, while Mr. Silas promenaded the hearth-rug, with one hand behind him, and the other firmly grasping his snuff-box. Presently, the snuff-box disappeared into one pocket, and out of another came a paper of a discoloured legal appearance, which also descended violently upon the card-basket.

'There is the title to the land. You will find it all in form, and so good-morning to you.' And Mr. Silas caught up his hat, brushed past his nephew, and walked at a tremendous pace down the garden-walk.

Brown, I regret to say, was not remarkable for decision of character. He stood gazing stupidly at the paper on the table, while a person glided gently into the room, laid a little white hand upon his shoulder, and looked up anxiously into his face.

'What's the matter, dear?'

Brown collected his thoughts, and explained that the dirty piece of paper was the title to the land which his uncle had bought for him in the days of yore, and now regretted his generosity.

'Of course, you will not accept a repented benevolence?'

'What am I to do? It is a more puzzling affair than you think. If my uncle cannot, and I will not make use of the property, the thing will be neutralised.'

'But you can thank your uncle for his gift, and then go to your man of business, and restore the gift by means of transfer.'

'That's the very thing! I'll get Cramp to do it for me; he lives at the bottom of the hill,' and Brown seized the paper and hastily quitted the house. Mrs. Brown—I have great pleasure in giving her proper title—went to the window, whence by straining her eyes she could command a view of the lawyer's door.

Meanwhile Mr. Silas Brown, who had taken the same direction, had slackened his pace considerably, and she saw her husband overtake his uncle, and address him once more. The old gentleman appeared to listen without any further attempt to escape; the snuff-box being again put into requisition. At length they reached the lawyer's house, and entered it together.

The bright eyes at the window grew dim, as their owner thought that for her sake Brown had quarrelled with his relations and destroyed his future prospects; so dim were they, that she did not at first see that the two persons who after a few moments quitted the lawyer's house, arm in arm, were her husband and his uncle; yet so it was. Mr. Silas Brown could not maintain his position against his nephew's new mode of attack; for if there was one thing more calculated than another to please him, it was that spirit of many independence which Brown had exhibited.

The bright eyes looked brighter than ever when Mr. Silas entered the house with his nephew and took her by the hand gravely, but kindly. What were his impressions of the bride may be conceived from the

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following remarkable speech which fell from his lips, as he kissed her forehead:

'If my nephew has acted without my permission, I see here the best excuse he could offer.'

Some days afterwards, when Brown, in the exuberance of his joy, related these circumstances to an intimate friend—the present writer in point of fact—he made a tremendous bull, which, as some people persist in thinking him clever, I shall put on record.

'It was a very good thing my uncle was one of the family,' he said, 'otherwise I don't think he would ever have come round.'

ENGLISH HEROES AND FRENCH HONOURS.

'CAN honour set to a leg or an arm, or take away the grief of a wound?' asks Sir John Falstaff; and then, by a subtle negation, he reduces honour to a word—to mere air, and would prove discretion to be the better part of valour. 'Out upon thee!' we may say, 'thou clay-brained, cowardly mountain of flesh!' and learn, if thou canst, that honour is something more than a name, and reputation than a jest. The olive, the laurel, and the parsley, the rewards of success at the Olympian games, were prized by the early Greeks, in the simplicity of their manners, more highly than in a later and degenerate day were statues of gold and marble monuments. The great and noble have in all ages estimated the distinguished opinion of mankind as something superior to the ephemeral possession of wealth; and whatever mark serves to perpetuate this opinion, is prized in proportion. Napoleon, perceiving this passion strong in man, instituted his renowned Legion of Honour—a mighty engine, whereby he created, out of nothing, as it were, the power of attracting thousands to his interests. By the establishment of this celebrated order, he at once effected an inexpensive yet priceless system of rewards, and threw open, to the most obscure in his empire, avenues to fame and promotion.

In this practical country, the government has till now left duty and virtue to be their own reward: no fictitious stimulants, no merely glittering prizes, were thought necessary; hence we were always tardy to encourage, by nominal distinctions, the talents and inventive powers, the courage and the heroism, of our countrymen. Public opinion, however, recognising the devotion and gallantry of the British army in the east, was brought to bear strongly upon those high in office and authority; and honourable marks of their country's gratitude have been distributed to those who had fought its battles and achieved its triumphs. The Crimean medals and clasps are proudly worn; and few can imagine the exultation with which they are treasured up by the men who have been pronounced worthy to wear them.

But what will perhaps be felt as a still higher distinction by the brave of our army, especially those who have been selected to receive the decoration of the French military war-medal, is, that their names and their deeds are recorded in the annals of their country; that not only can they and their friends read the specific grounds of their being rewarded, but that centuries hence, this same document will describe to the curious antiquary something of the chivalry of the present time; in a word, that their names and personal achievements are written on the scroll of history.

It is our intention, in the present article, to give an analysis of the contents of this document, and lay before the reader, as far as our space will permit, the grounds upon which this distinction has been individually conferred upon the non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the several battalions and regiments which served during the campaigns of Bulgaria and the Crimea. Doubtless, the persons named in the parliamentary paper recently published, are but a fraction of

those who have acted with similar heroism, whose brilliant exploits, under another star, would perhaps have been also conspicuously noticed; for where a selection of this kind takes place, it stands to reason that some deserving must be omitted. We do not doubt, however, that the choice made has been regulated with the utmost impartiality, and that no one has been overlooked or neglected, but from the impossibility of deciding upon and rewarding the merits of all.

It appears, then, that a list of 320 names of non-commissioned officers and soldiers, selected for recommendation to His Majesty the Emperor of the French, to receive the decoration of the French military war-medal, has been given in, of which 124 are privates, 45 corporals, 129 sergeants, and the rest gunners, drivers, and bombardiers, with one drummer, one trumpeter, and one bugler. The more general claims to reward are presented to us under the heads: 'Distinguished services;' 'zeal and gallant conduct;' 'general coolness and gallantry under fire.' Sometimes it is recorded: 'Intrepid conduct;' 'volunteering to bring in wounded men from the front;' 'firing on the enemy after being wounded;' 'zeal and activity for the performance of duties in the trenches.' On other occasions it is: 'Never absent from the regiment;' 'a clean and well-conducted soldier in camp and in the trenches;' 'volunteered and employed as a sharp-shooter;' 'behaved well at a sortie.' Again, we have: 'Present during the whole siege;' 'refused to go to rear, although severely wounded with a spent shot;' 'joined his regiment [at the Battle of Inkermann], having marched that morning from Balaklava on hearing the firing, although on detached duty;' 'went in search of wounded comrades under a heavy fire.' We also find it noticed of some that they set a good example to their comrades, always encouraging them by a cheerful manner of performing their duties, and that by their conduct and discipline they kept the young recruits up to the mark of their duties. These brief headings—the preamble, as it were, of the parliamentary document—will give the reader some idea of the general services rendered and appreciated. But in addition to these, it should be observed that most of the men selected for notice had been in all the principal engagements, had distinguished themselves in action, and that many of them had been severely wounded. We could wish that the terms in which their conduct is described were not so concise and general, that the secretary of each commanding officer had gone a little more into detail, and given us a few more personal anecdotes of their men. However, we are not left altogether destitute of some individual instances of heroism, and from these we will extract a few for the pleasure of the reader, premising that we do not intend to raise by this selection the names and exploits of those we choose above those of others, whose deeds may have been equally daring, but not of such singular interest.

Sergeant Seth Bond, of the 11th Regiment of Hussars, is honourably mentioned, as having served in the campaign of Bulgaria in 1854; as having been present at the affair of Bulganak, and the battles of Alma, Balaklava, and Inkermann; and as having at Alma, when ordered to pursue and capture prisoners, exhibited great subordination in sparing, at the suggestion of a staff-officer, a Russian, who had wounded him. He was in the action at Balaklava, where his coolness and gallantry were noticed; and served in the whole campaign from 1854 to 1856. Lance-corporal Harrison, of the same regiment, is also specially named, as having 'behaved very gallantly in galloping to the rescue of several comrades who were fighting against overwhelming odds.' Of Gunner-and-driver Davis, belonging to the Royal Regiment of Artillery, we are told that he distinguished himself in Sand-bag Battery.

When the embrasure had caught fire, he leaped into it and extinguished the flame, though exposed to a very heavy fire. Acting Bombardier Jenkin, of the same regiment, 'spiked the guns in the redoubt on Canrobert's Hill, on the 25th of October 1854; remained in the works after the Turks had fled; and, although the Russians were advancing rapidly up the hill, did not quit the place until he had spiked every gun.' We are also glad to find the name of Bombardier Angus Sutherland, also belonging to this company of salamanders, amongst the number of those selected to receive a French military war-medal. His heroism has already been made public; but we will give the account of his distinguished services in the words of the parliamentary paper. 'He landed with the siege-train; served in the first bombardment, and was severely wounded in both legs by the bursting of a shell. He served again in the April and subsequent bombardments. At the explosion of the French gun-park, he was one of the first men to volunteer to carry away a number of live shell and carcasses.' It would be perhaps difficult to find one more peculiarly meriting the honourable recognition of the French emperor.

It may perhaps seem invidious at first sight to single out instances of individual gallantry, when all appear to have acted with exemplary courage; yet we cannot forbear noticing some more special cases of great daring. For example, William Hennessey, a private of the 20th Regiment, who was present at all the actions which took place in the Crimea, and during the whole of the siege operations is reported to have 'behaved with great spirit in the trenches.' A live shell fell amongst his party, which deprived one of his comrades of his presence of mind so effectually, that he remained standing near it. Seeing the danger, private Hennessey rushed out, and brought the man under cover at the peril of his own life. Charles Godden, of the 23d Regiment, is mentioned particularly as having distinguished himself on the 21st of September 1854, by remaining at his post, Ajax-like, after the rest of the party had been driven in from the advanced trenches by the Russians. Two privates of the 31st Regiment, Richard Stapleton and James Rutts, are also memorialised for similar conduct. They were strongly recommended by Captain Rowland of the 41st Regiment, who commanded the party engaged in the rifle-pits, in the advance of the right sap, advanced trench, on the night of the 4th of September 1855, for great coolness and bravery in keeping possession of one of the pits for half an hour, until they were ordered to retire.

We can easily imagine of what value a character like Colour-sergeant Ridley, of the 42d Regiment, must be to an officer eager to push forward some important outwork. On the 3d of July 1855, this brave soldier was one of a working-party employed in turning an old Russian trench in the advanced parallel, the party being under fire, and much exposed. He encouraged the men by working with them himself in the most exposed position; and it was mainly owing to his example and good conduct, we are informed, that the work was speedily and satisfactorily done. Another sergeant of the same regiment, William Strathearn, on the 11th of October 1854, at the commencement of the siege, when with a covering-party on the right attack, the enemy came out in force, and attacked with heavy field-pieces, exhibited great bravery by volunteering to pass, under a heavy fire, to a party of the Rifle Brigade, with orders to bring them up to the assistance of the party in the battery. In fact, the men of the 42d Regiment seem especially to have displayed coolness and intrepidity. Lance-corporal Bennet, on the night of the 18th of June 1855, when a sortie was expected, and a sudden alarm given, the men of another regiment immediately on the left of where he was having retired, mainly contributed, by his steadiness and example, to

keep the men of his party on their ground. He stood fast himself, and by coolness and self-possession encouraged the others to do so. Again, private Carmichael, on the night of the 6th of August 1855, when a partial attack was made by some of the enemy's pickets, distinguished himself by similar behaviour. On the same night, an attack was expected from the Redan. He was one of those who volunteered to go out to the front, under fire, to watch it closely. He always, when an opportunity offered, by his brave conduct set a good example to young soldiers.

The perils of war do not consist in the charge, the battle, and the pursuit alone; there are many episodes still more terrible, but less exciting. Take, for example, the service of Colour-sergeant M'Donald of the 47th Regiment. Whilst holding the Quarries on the 7th of June—the detachment running short of ammunition—this non-commissioned officer passed through a heavy fire of grape, shell, and musketry, for ammunition, and returned through the same fire with a barrel of ammunition on his shoulder. Private Daniel Flanagan volunteered, under a very heavy fire, to place sand-bags in the embrasures of 21-gun Battery, 9th of April 1855; whilst Acting Sergeant Francis, of the 48th Regiment, is recommended for having, when on duty in the trenches on the night of the 4th of June 1855, when an alarm was given that the Russians were approaching, and a sortie about to be made, and when the sentries in advance had retired in some confusion, supplied their place by a new line of sentries, which he formed out of a number of volunteers who offered themselves, and thereby prevented the further advance of the Russians. This took place under a very heavy fire. The endurance of pain is curiously exemplified by Corporal Patrick Finns of the 68th Regiment, who particularly distinguished himself at Inkermann. Two musket-balls pierced his jaws, yet he never went into hospital, and did his duty in the trenches through the siege. Thomas Handley, private of the 88th Regiment, is noticed as having distinguished himself on the night of the 14th of August 1855, when some young sentries were disposed to retire before a body of Russians, by forcing them back to their posts, and remaining out himself all night close to a Russian rifle-pit.

We close our list with the name of Private Peter M'Kay, who served throughout the war, was present at the battles of Alma and Balaklava, and the assaults of the 18th of June and 8th of September 1855. He is represented as being the first man of the volunteers of his regiment who entered the Redan on the night of the fall of Sebastopol.

Such are some of the deeds of common and individual gallantry which have entitled certain of our Crimean heroes to the special privilege of being decorated with the French military war-medal. Undoubtedly the honour will be well appreciated, for the occasion is novel in the history of the two nations. It is the seal of mutual amity, and as a seal, is beautifully and exquisitely executed. It has been too truly urged against the war-medal produced by our artists, that it is little better than a half-crown appended to the breast of the soldier; and we must confess it does look like one. But for the clasps and the ribbon, and without close inspection, it might easily be mistaken for a two-and-sixpenny piece. It is solid and substantial, it is true; but where does it display any trace of art, of fine taste—any of that originality which, in our estimation, ought to characterise a national gift for such an occasion? The French medal, on the contrary, is not only a memento, it is a memento worthy the occasion. It is a work of art, and pleases the eye whilst it satisfies the sentiment. A silver wreath encircles a golden eagle on one side, and a head of Napoleon on the reverse. The rest of the medal is inlaid with a beautiful

blue enamel, which harmonises exquisitely with the gold and the silver. 'Valour and Discipline' is the simple motto. Already, it is said, our soldiers appreciate the artistic difference of the French and British medals; and we must ourselves regret, that when a national token of the kind is struck, a little more fancy is not allowed to have play. In all our national devices there is the same square-and-rule principle at work, the same formula. May we not hope that our Schools of Design will teach our rising pupils better things, and that henceforth our British taste will take a wider range, and learn to create rather than reproduce?

This is, however, regarding the subject-matter of the present paper from a material point of view. Whatever be the design or form of the offering, we are sure it will be equally prized by those who won it by their deeds. It will be to them the symbol of their country's gratitude, a memorial of bygone dangers. It is pleasant to remember past perils. The events of the recent campaigns will be to those who have served in the east a source of perpetual pride; and many a Nestor will recount, years to come, his particular achievement at Alma, Balaklava, Inkermann, and Sebastopol:

Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
Old men forget; yea, all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
The feats he did that day.

ADVENTURES IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

FROM the time the Landers solved the great African problem, by descending the Quóra, or Niger, from Yaúri to the sea, many eyes, philanthropical, commercial, and cosmopolitan, have been turned with intense interest towards this noble highway connecting Central Africa with the outer world. The enterprise of some Liverpool merchants speedily seized upon the route; and Laird, Oldfield, and Allen sailed up the renowned river as far as Rábba, and likewise explored upwards of eighty miles of a previously unknown affluent, stretching eastward, called the Tsádda. In 1841, government made an attempt on a large scale, but resulting in little else than misery to the explorers and loss of life; and the late Mr Beecroft, up to 1845, added his quota to our knowledge of the Quóra, and likewise entered and explored the Wóri branch.

The adventure, however, had always proved difficult and disastrous, and nothing more was thought of it till 1852, when it was suddenly announced by Dr Barth, that in his journey across the Great Desert, to reach if possible the province of Adamáwa, he had crossed a large stream called the Bínue, which he conjectured to be identical with the affluent of the Quóra already known as the Tsádda. This woke up the government again; and an iron screw-schooner called the *Pleid* was built, equipped, and despatched in 1854, with instructions from the Admiralty to pursue the course of the Tsádda from the point where the explorations of Allen and Oldfield had ceased, and to endeavour to meet and afford assistance to Drs Barth and Vogel.

Three works respecting this voyage have already appeared, the last and most detailed by Dr Baikie, who was appointed medical officer and naturalist, but who, after the death of Mr Beecher, undertook, as senior officer, the charge of the expedition, and who, at the most interesting point of the route—namely, at that part of the Tsádda where their chief business was to begin—assumed the direction of the vessel, in consequence of the alleged apathy of Mr Taylor, the

master.* At a considerable distance beyond this point everything was encouraging. 'Though no towns or villages could be seen to enliven the prospect, yet everything around us wore a smiling aspect. The river, still upwards of a mile in breadth, preserved its noble appearance; the neighbouring soil teemed with a diversified vegetation, and the frequent recurrence of hill and dale pleased the eye. Nor was animal life wanting, for from our mast-head we enjoyed the novel sight of a large herd of elephants, upwards of a hundred in number, crossing a little streamlet not much more than a mile from us.' Their anxiety for the appearance of the abodes of men was speedily relieved by the discovery of a large walled town, off which, although it was now late in the day, they anchored, and Dr Baikie landed. Numbers of people had been observed on the banks, gazing at the steamer; but on the gig approaching the land, they all disappeared but one man. This individual was at first in an agony of terror and astonishment; but when the white man went up to him, and offered his hand, he suddenly threw down his spear, and danced and shouted for joy. He would insist upon carrying the stranger through some marshy ground, vociferating all the time in the Houssa language: 'White men, white men!—the Nazarenes have come. White men good, white men rich, white men kings; white men, white men!' The townsmen now came forth, joining in the shouts, and many rolling on the ground, and exhibiting an extravagance of delight. The king they found standing to receive them under the shade of a wide-spreading tree; and when they approached, looking upwards, he thanked God that white men had come to his country. Dr Baikie visited other towns occupied by the same tribe—a tribe half of whom are Mohammedans, and the other half pagans—and found them little centres of a civilisation, curious to us Europeans as occurring in Central Africa, and in a region where white men were known only by reputation. Little plots of ground surrounded the towns, planted with vegetables—the first signs of horticulture they had yet met with. 'On the sides and roofs of the huts were trained pumpkins, gourds, and other cucurbitaceous species; while in the gardens were numerous plants of ochro and graceful papaws, with still unripe fruit. In a little market we found women bartering beer for bundles of corn of different kinds. Hearing that there were horses, we asked to see them, and were accordingly shewn several fine Arabs, nicely groomed and cared for, and in fine condition. In each stable hung oval-shaped shields, made of elephant hides, large enough to protect both rider and steed. . . . Most of the inhabitants were in native-made clothes, but some appeared in garments made of goat-skins, while a few wore still more scanty coverings of green leaves.'

On reading this description, some readers will doubtless be induced to speculate on the utility—apart from religion—of our attempting to introduce a new kind of civilisation among such a people, inquiring what benefit we can expect them to derive from our extending the circle of their wants and ambitions. The whole country, it will be seen from these pages, on both banks of the two great streams, is divided into little 'kingdoms,' more or less independent, with sovereigns who live in huts for palaces, and give audience under the shade of spreading trees, and peoples whose industry is competent to supply their own limited demands. But on examining closer the condition of these communities, it becomes obvious that, although doubtless progressing, they are as yet far behind in that appointed march of development, not from, but to the state of

* *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage up the Rivers Quóra and Bínue (commonly known as the Niger and Tsádda) in 1854. Published with the Sanction of Her Majesty's Government. By William Balfour Baikie, M.D., &c., in command of the Expedition. London: Murray. 1856.*

nature—the state in which social happiness may be enjoyed, with or without the luxuries of European civilisation. Even in the instances now adverted to, the apparently peaceful inhabitants of the towns are a foreign force of Fulo, Fulo, or Feléta (best known under the last name), who, failing in a hostile expedition, preferred settling themselves in the country, and intermarrying with the natives, to returning home; and every year they make a grand excursion among their neighbours to collect slaves.

These Fulo are Mohammedans, and in their own region—that is, when they are of unmixed blood—are far removed in appearance from the negro. Their profile is almost European. Their foreheads are high, and at times expansive; the features long, and the chin pointed; the nose is straight, or at times almost aquiline; the usually blue expressive eye has a wandering, restless cast; while the lips, which are inclined to be thick, exhibit the only marked Ethiopic affinity. They occupy a high place in the scale of intelligence and quickness, and in commercial concerns they are keen and active.

We will now give a little adventure of our author, characteristic of a country where there are no conveyances. Returning alone to his vessel from a visit to one of the towns still further up the Binue than those we have mentioned, he walked barefoot through a swampy country seven or eight miles, and then lost almost all trace of the path. He tried to proceed by his pocket-compass, but soon became bewildered. He climbed several trees, but could discern no landmark; and finally the grass and brushwood became so long, thick, and close, that there was hardly any moving at all. The sun had set; the darkness was coming rapidly down; and it was no longer a question of proceeding on his journey, but of passing the night in the wilderness. He determined that the safest and most comfortable plan would be to perch upon a tree, and accordingly, having selected one, he proceeded to climb to his roost. 'Luckily for me, it had a double trunk, with a distance between of about two feet; so tying my shoes together, and casting them over my shoulder, I placed my back against the one trunk, and my feet against the other, and so managed to climb until I got hold of a branch by which I swung myself further up, and finally got into a spot about twelve or fifteen feet from the ground. Here I placed myself upon a branch about a foot in diameter, projecting at nearly right angles; and by leaning against the main trunk, and stretching out my legs before me, I found I had a tolerably comfortable seat, whence I might peer into the surrounding obscure. The night, fortunately, was not very dark, the stars gleamed overhead, while vivid flashes of lightning over the neighbouring hills enabled me from time to time to cast a momentary glance around me. I got on my shoes and stockings, as a protection against insects, then passed a piece of cord loosely round the branch, so that I could pass my arm through it and steady myself, and finally made preparations for repose by nicking two places in the bark of the tree for my heels to rest in. About eight o'clock, I distinctly heard in the distance the hum of human voices, and shouted to try and attract attention, but to no avail; believing, however, that there were some huts near, I marked the direction by a large tree. Feeling rather tired, I lay down on my face along the branch, and passing each of my hands into the opposite sleeve, to prevent them from being bitten, I was soon in a state of oblivion. I must have slept upwards of four hours, when I awoke, rather stiff from my constrained position, and had to try a change of attitude. To pass the time, I lit a cigar, and, as I had but one, I only smoked half of it, carefully putting back the remainder to serve for my breakfast. A dew was now falling; crickets and frogs innumerable were celebrating nocturnal orgies; huge mosquitoes, making

a noise as loud as bees, were assailing me on all sides; and some large birds were roosting on the tree over my head. I tried in vain to doze away the hours; but I had had my usual allowance of sleep, and not being a bigoted partisan of the drowsy god, even when I really required his aid, he refused to attend to my invocations. I watched with most painful interest the rising and setting of various constellations, and was at length delighted with the appearance of Venus, shewing that morning was not now far off. A fresh novelty next presented itself, in the form of sundry denizens of the forest crowding to pay homage to their visitor. Howls of various degrees of intensity continually reached my ears, some resembling more the high notes of the hyæna, with occasional variations; and others, very close to me, being unquestionably the deep notes of the leopard. I once fancied that I saw a figure moving not far from me, but could not be positive. As light began to suffuse itself over the eastern sky, my nocturnal companions gradually retired, until at last I was left alone, but not solitary, for that I could not be as long as the incessant buzzing in my ears told me that my lilliputian winged antagonists were yet unwearied in their attacks, and still unsatiated with blood. At length, as gray dawn was being supplanted by brighter daylight, I ventured to descend from my roosting-place, where I had spent, not altogether without comfort, upwards of eleven hours.'

This is a finished sketch, and one of the best of its kind: but a literary picture is beyond our author's skill. He attempts no filling up, no reflections, to give depth and originality to a situation which, considered in reference to the locality, a wilderness in the heart of Africa, where white men were objects only of report or tradition, was nothing less than sublime. We have only to add to his account of the adventure, that after many fatiguing attempts to get through the long damp grass, which in one place formed a kind of tunnel half a mile long, through which he was obliged almost to creep, he came to some native huts, and by the aid of the inhabitants, at length reached his vessel. We may mention here, in reference to the vague hints about wild animals given in the above sketch, that there are fewer notices in the volume of the fauna of the country than might have been expected. The hippopotami are more frequently mentioned than any other species; they were frequently seen from the deck gamboling in the shallow and reedy water near the banks, or one of them, perhaps, popping its head up suddenly within an oar's length of them, to gaze for a moment at the unaccustomed visitors. These animals, however, rarely venture into deep water; they delight to lie upon sand-banks covered by water, with their heads only above the surface, basking in the sun. 'When more sportively inclined, they may be observed splashing clumsily about, opening their enormous jaws, displaying their tusks, and tossing their huge heads in anything but a graceful manner.' Their flesh is much prized by the natives; and their tusks are much more valuable as ivory than those of the elephant.

As they ascended the river further and further towards the east, the aspect and manners of the people became more and more savage; and in one place, where the author had landed in the gig, their rude attentions became very suspicious. They insisted on his spending the night with them; and it was only by a ruse, that he and his companions regained the boat, and pushed off. On another occasion, they ran nearly the same risk—if risk it was—in a locality so remarkable that we must describe it in the author's own words. 'We entered a creek on the north side, running nearly parallel with the river, and shortly afterwards sighted a village, at which we soon arrived. To our astonishment, the first thing that brought us up was our running the bow of the gig against a hut, and on looking around, we found

the whole place to be flooded. We advanced right into the middle of the village, and found no resting-place—right and left, before and behind, all was water. People came out of the huts to gaze at the apparition, and standing at the doors of their abodes, were, without the smallest exaggeration, immersed nearly to their knees, and one child I particularly observed, up to its waist. How the interiors of the huts of these amphibious creatures were constructed, I cannot conjecture, but we saw dwellings from which, if inhabited, the natives must have dived like beavers to get outside. We pulled in speechless amazement through this city of waters, wondering greatly that human beings could exist under such conditions. We had heard of wild tribes living in caverns and among rocks; we had read of races in Hindostan roosting in trees, of whole families in China spending their lives in rafts or in boats in their rivers and their canals; we knew, too, of Turiks and Shanbah roaming over vast sandy deserts, and of Eskimo burrowing in snow-retreats; but never had we witnessed, or ever dreamt of such a spectacle as that of creatures endowed like ourselves, living by choice like a colony of beavers, or after the fashion of the hippopotami and crocodiles of the neighbouring swamps.

Observing a patch of dry land round a large tree, they landed with their instruments, and took some hurried observations; but soon after, the behaviour of the wild people—more savage than any they had yet encountered—attracted their notice. 'The men began to draw closer around us, to exhibit their arms, and to send away their women and children. Their attentions became more and more familiar, and they plainly evidenced a desire to seize and plunder our boat. A sour-looking old gentleman, who was squatting on the branch of a tree, was mentioned as their king; but if so, he made no endeavour to restrain the cupidity of his sans culottes. Part of a red shirt belonging to one of our Krumen was seen peeping out from below a bag, and some advanced to lay hold of it, when suddenly my little dog, which had been lying quietly in the stern-sheets, raised her head to see what was causing such commotion. Her sudden appearance startled the Dulti warriors, who had never seen such an animal before; so they drew back to take counsel together, making signs to me to know if she could bite, to which I replied in the affirmative. . . . At length we shoved in among some long grass, hoping to find dry land; but after having proceeded until completely stopped by the thickness of the growth, we still found upwards of a fathom of water. At this moment, Mr May's ear caught a voice not far behind us; so we shoved quietly back, and found a couple of canoes trying to cut off our retreat. Seeing this, we paddled vigorously back, there not being room for using our oars, and the canoes did not venture to molest us. We were quickly paddling across the flooded plain, when suddenly a train of canoes in eager pursuit issued out upon us. . . . Not knowing how matters might terminate, we thought it advisable to prepare for defence; so I took our revolver to load it; but now, when it was needed, the ramrod was stiff and quite immovable. Mr May got a little pocket-pistol ready, and we had, if required, a cutlass and a ship's musket, which the Krumen—by this time in a desperate fright—wished to see prepared, calling out to us: "Load de big gun—load de big gun!" Could an unconcerned spectator have witnessed the scene, he would have been struck with the amount of the ludicrous it contained. There were our Kruboyas, all as pale as black men could be, the perspiration starting from every pore, exerting to the utmost their powerful muscles; while Mr May and I were trying to look as unconcerned as possible, and, to lessen the indignity of our retreat, were smiling and bowing to the Dulti people, and beckoning them to follow us. Their light

canoes were very narrow, and the people were obliged to stand upright. The blades of their paddles, instead of being of the usual lozenge shape, were oblong and rectangular, and all curved in the direction of the propulsion. It was almost a regatta, our gig taking and keeping the lead. Ahead, we saw an opening in the bush, by which we hoped to make our final retreat; but we were prepared, should the boat take the ground, to jump out at once and shove her into deep water. Fortune favoured us; we reached the doubtful spot, and with a single stroke of our paddles, shot into the open river. Here we knew we were comparatively safe, as, if the natives tried to molest us in the clear water, all we had to do was to give their canoes the stern, and so upset them; our only fear had been that of being surrounded by them when entangled among the bushes. Our pursuers apparently guessed that we had now got the advantage, as they declined following us into the river, but turning, paddled back to their watery abodes; and so ended the grand Dulti chase.'

Previously to this adventure, it had been determined that the explorations were to end here; and accordingly the rest of the volume is taken up with the incidents of the return. Very different was the moral as well as material aspect of the village capitals lower down the river from that of the amphibious city of huts. One of these, which in the upward passage had been almost deserted, in consequence of a threatened Pulo invasion, was now full of life and bustle. Although the day was well advanced, business still went merrily on, traders were eager and energetic, and artisans continued plying industriously at their trades. Among the commodities in the market were salt, beer, palm-oil, shea-butter, corn, yams, dried yams for making fufu, dried fish, the powdered leaves of the baobab-tree, used for colouring various dishes, seeds of different kinds, mats, bags, cotton-grass and mixed cloths, the bulb of an orchidaceous plant used as food, impure lime, camwood, &c. Here and there were extensive dye-works and scouring establishments, and a blacksmith was hard at work at his forge. At this place, they went to visit an old lady, who, remarking with a smile that she was rather in dishabille, produced a little bit of looking-glass and her galena-case, and proceeded to stain her eyelids and arrange her head-dress.

This, it will be seen, is a very interesting as well as informing book; and it relates, on the best authority, the progress of an expedition of more importance than will perhaps be visible to inattentive readers. It has identified the Binue and Tsadda, and thus discovered a navigable river conducting to the very heart of Africa; while it has demonstrated the erroneousness of the theory which derived the Binue from Lake Tsad. It has enabled us to reconcile the accounts of ancient geographers, who confounded the main river and its noble confluent, the one running east, and the other west; and it has added considerably to our knowledge of the richness of the soil, and the commercial bent of the various tribes who inhabit it. Dr Baikie, notwithstanding his regatta with the Dulti, has formed a high opinion of the African, who is by nature, he thinks, 'mild and friendly, apt to learn, and desirous of being taught.' He considers that his intellect, when duly cultivated, will rank with that of the white man. The grand blot on his character is not domestic slavery—which with him is of a mild and kindly nature, and an institution so essentially belonging to the state of society, that it can be done away with only by slow degrees—but the foreign slave-hunts, slave-hunting, and all its scarcely imaginable horrors. 'The only real method of effectually checking this detestable trade is by striking at the root of the supply, by going directly to the fountain-head. It is by doing our utmost to inform the natives, by softening their feelings, and by shewing them how much more

advantageous it would be for them to retain their countrymen at home, even as hewers of wood and drawers of water, than to depopulate the land, that we shall succeed in our efforts. For this purpose, no auxiliary is more effectual than commerce, which to minds constituted like those of the African is highly intelligible. Prove to them that they can derive more benefit by cultivating the ground, and by selling their grain, their camwood, their palm-oil, their shea-butter, than by living in a state of perpetual warfare. Convince them how much happier it would be for all to be able to rest quietly under their own vines and fig-trees, than, as at present, living in daily, nay, hourly dread of being carried off into captivity by some one more powerful than themselves. And, lastly, offer them, as long as they abide by our wishes and directions, whatever advantages it may be in our power to present to them.'

THE MAGICAL MANGO.

Everybody has heard of the Indian juggler's trick of producing a young mango-tree from a seed which he takes from his bag, and submits to your examination. The seed is sound, and fit for planting. The juggler collects a quantity of earth, moistens it with water, and, taking a mango-stone from his bag, plants it in the earth he has prepared. Over all, he places a moderate-sized round basket, upon which he spreads his cloth or a native blanket. After an interval of discordant music and incantation, the cloth and basket are removed, the muddy seed is taken from the earth, and you observe that long, slender, white fibres, forming the root, have suddenly shot out. Again it is planted, and covered as before, and the music becomes more discordant, and the incantation more furious. At length the charm is complete, and the removal of the basket displays a young and tender shoot, with two opening leaves at its summit. Exclamations of surprise from the bystanders, and satisfaction from the band of jugglers, complete the second act. Again all is covered up anew, and the ear-splitting music goes on. Suddenly the coverings are removed, and, to the amazement and delight of all, the first shoot of a young mango-tree, with its small light-coloured leaves, makes its appearance. Seven years ago, I was the spectator of such a scene at Madras, where I had gone on sick leave, and was glad of any amusement to relieve the monotony of a forced confinement to the house. I had a shrewd suspicion that, if I could examine this tree of miraculous growth, it would turn out a very simple affair. Acting on this idea, I suddenly seized it, and, in spite of the clamour of the jugglers, bore it off. It certainly had the appearance of a real mango-shoot. There was the dirty stone, wet and discoloured, with the earth clinging to it. From its lower part, the white fibres of the recent root streamed out with a most natural appearance, whilst from the upper side sprang a perfect young shoot, six or eight inches in height, with the leaves in their earliest growth. A basin of water solved the mystery, for, on washing the stone, I found it old and dry, and split down on one side. From its cavity I took out a small bundle of grass roots, one end of which was tied with thread, and withdrew the young shoot of the mango from the top of the stone. Here you have only one part of the apparatus of deception. It is perfected in the following manner:—The mango, an evergreen, grows in almost every large garden in India. A confederate first pulls a sufficient quantity of the roots of grass which are white, long, and fibrous, and resemble the first growth of roots from the mango-seed. He ties them up, inserts the tied end in the cleft stone, and gives them secretly with the cloth to his chief, who plants a mango-stone before your eyes, and whilst putting the cloth over the basket, dexterously withdraws it, and substitutes the stone with the roots. The moist earth in which it is buried removes all appearance of deception. Again the confederate is ready with his progressive slips of mango, which, at every removal of the basket, he contrives to place within reach of the operator without being seen; and the latter, in his manipulations whilst covering up the basket with the cloth, slips them into the upper part of the slit in the mango-

stone. The same process may be continued so as to give you the fruit growing in its various stages, but this of course must depend on the trick being performed in the fruit-season. I was twenty-three years in India, and never met with anybody who could explain the *modus operandi* of this trick, though almost all—not all!—felt satisfied that it was a trick.—*From a Correspondent.*

WHO ARE THE GREAT OF EARTH?

Who are the mighty? sing,
The chiefs of old renown,
On some red field who won the victor's crown
Of tears and triumphing?
The northmen bold, who first o'er stormy seas
Sent down the 'raven' banner on the breeze?
Not these—O no—not these!

Who are the great of earth?
The mighty hunters? kings of ancient line,
For ages traced, half fable, half divine,
Whose stone-wrought lions guard in heathen pride
Their tomb-like palaces? where now we read,
They lived, and reigned, and died!
Who spoke, and millions rushed to toil and bleed?
Not these—not these indeed!

Who are the mighty? they!
The builders of Egyptian pyramids?
The unknown kings, on whose stone-coffin lids
Strange forms are scrolled? or men, whose awful sway
Wrought the rock-temple, reared the cromlech gray,
Whose smoke, and fire, and incense darkened day?
Not they—O no—not they!

Who are the great of earth?
Mark, where yon prophet stands,
The loadstar needle trembles in his hands,
O'er western seas he finds for mind a throne—
Or he on whose wrapt sight new wonders shone,
Where heavenward turned, his glass made worlds his
OWN—

Not he—not these alone!

Who are the mighty? see,
Where art's a wizard; where the marble rife
With grace and beauty quickens into life—
Or where, as danger's waves beat wild and free,
Some 'glorious arm' like Moses' parts the sea,
That a vexed people yet redeemed may be—
The statesman?—say?—is 't he?

O no—not these the noblest triumphs prove.
Go, where forgiveness turning like the dove
Alights o'er life's dark flood on some lone heart—
Where men to men, truth, justice, peace, impart,
As best interpreters of Godlike love—
Where all life's noblest charities have birth:
There dwell the great, the kings of peerless worth—
They shall subdue the earth!

J. B.

RAILWAY CUSTOM.

While passing from Ghent to Antwerp, in 1855, through the Pays de Waes, I observed a singular custom, of which I could not obtain any explanation. When the railway-train was in motion, the labourers, both men and women, engaged in the fields, joined hands, formed themselves in line; and either turning their backs on the carriages or at right angles with them, bent, and in some cases knelt down, preserving this attitude until the train had passed. It is worth noting, that only such as were engaged on a piece of ground where there were crops growing acted in this way; those standing on the road or on ploughed land taking no notice of the train at all; nor, indeed, did any do so save while it was actually moving. I have never seen or heard of this custom elsewhere.—*Notes and Queries.*

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